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"LABOR AND LIFE OF THE PEOPLE." Vol. II. London. Continued.)
 Edited by Charles Booth. With Maps and Appendix under a separate cover.
 Williams & Norgate, 1891.

Mr. Charles Booth's particular results, applying exclusively to London, are probably of less interest to the readers of this journal than the methods which he has employed, and the "moral," if any, of his researches.

It may be as well, however, to mention, for purposes of comparison, that the final result for all London, omitting inmates of institutions, is, in terms of Mr. Booth's well-known scale of classes, as follows: A (lowest), .9 per cent.; B (very poor), 7.5 per cent.; C and D (poor), 22.3 per cent. Total in poverty, 30.7 per cent. E and F (working class, comfortable), 51.5 per cent.; G and H (middle class and above), 17.8 per cent. Total in comfort, 69.3 per cent. The state of things thus described is probably better than was imagined before the East London figures were published, but worse than was anticipated, on the basis of those figures, for the rest of London. Having said thus much, I leave the question of particular results, and pass to methods and principles which are of universal applicability.

Mr. Booth, although—need I say it?—an accomplished statistician, has not the merely statistical mind. He knows that numbers are eloquent only to those who are precisely informed as to what the numbers represent. He therefore bestows the greatest possible pains both in checking figures by figures, and in supplementing figures by descriptions. Thus, the class-percentages, as estimated by the school-board visitors, who know the homes, are checked by class-percentages resting on the opinion of the school-teachers, who know the children directly and the homes only at second-hand. The teachers' tendency is to state the proportion of great poverty as higher than that obtained from those who know the homes. The discrepancy is marked, but not enormous or unaccountable. I note at this point that Mr. Booth has rightly aimed at giving the facts directly observable as regards conditions of life. A home where the man drinks his good wages is to the visitor's eye a poverty-stricken home, and the family lives as wretchedly poor; and, on his visitor's report, Mr. Booth classes it as such. He could not do otherwise without opening up the history of all his cases, and thus destroying the simple fidelity of his statistics, so far as the question "poor or not poor?" is concerned. But yet, as the classification is ostensibly by *earnings*, a real contradiction, to which Mr. Booth is quite alive, must thus be introduced into some of its details, and the reader must bear this in mind.

Such qualifications of the figures, and altogether a more life-like way of regarding them, are made possible by the second great characteristic of Mr. Booth's method,—the supplementation of statistics by description accurately relevant to them, a device which Mr. Booth may almost be said to have created. The great type of this supplementation is the checking of map 1, with its uniformly tinted blocks of thirty thousand inhabitants, by the huge map 2, in four parts, which shows London street by street, every street being colored according to the prevalent position of its inhabitants in the social scale, as judged by visitors familiar with the neighborhood.

The inhabitants of the same street, however, are not all of the same stamp.

To give the reader a chance of picturing to himself the real variety of a London street, and checking the short method of the graphical representation, nearly two hundred pages are devoted to detailed description, house by house, of typical streets. These are actual places, but the right names are not given except in the case of a "black" trio at the top of Drury Lane, now in great part pulled down.

Special investigations on the same "joint method" are made into the model dwellings, the common lodging-houses of the homeless men,—in every case by those best qualified for the particular task. Thus a real conspectus is obtained both of all kinds of London homes, a quasi-home, and of the lives of that very small number of roving men who have none.

Perhaps the completest example, however, of the joint method is to be found in Mr. Llewellyn Smith's study, continued from the former volume, of the migration and immigration between London and the country. The figures which show that, on the whole, the provincial immigrants in the different parts of London vary inversely as the poverty of the districts, are supplemented by the extraordinarily opposite history (with changed names) of the family of "Mr. Patton, of Little Guilden," showing not only how a successful countryman in London becomes the centre of an immigration from his native place, which extends in geometrical ratio, but also from what motives a man who wishes to retire from active life may form a unit in the considerable migration from London to the country, which differs in kind from the immigration. I lay stress on this most important result, because, in upsetting a popular theory that the country immigrant is the sufferer by his immigration, it illustrates the superlative causal force of competence and character. If we wish to keep the countryman out, we must improve the Londoner.

Throughout the work, both in the description of parts of London, especially of six bad patches in the West End which mere statistics tend to merge in the wealth around them, and in the elaborate study of the child-world of London in its huge school system, the moral results of which, especially in the "worst" quarters, show the unique ethical force of leadership and *esprit de corps*, the same care has been taken to preserve a due relation between statistics and description. And Mr. Booth, whether by selection or by influence, has secured in his helpers the same shrewd yet sympathetic spirit for which his own writing is conspicuous.

Thus the book is thoroughly good reading, and of the highest interest throughout; except that I find some difficulty in caring for the street descriptions of places which are not named, and of which, therefore, the local influences and conditions are unascertainable to me. Here and there the writing is even brilliant. I know hardly anything in social literature more striking and suggestive than the juxtaposition (p. 299) of the two lives of Central London,—the gilded and the squalid,—with reference to their dependence on one another.

Has the whole work a practical moral? Booth himself has not yet found one, though he is confirmed in his view that the elimination of Class B is the problem, and evidently still cherishes the germs of a designer upon the Poor Law. We shall all await with the deepest interest his examination of the immense system—or chaos—of multiform agencies now employed in "doing good," which he proposes to undertake before suggesting a remedy of his own.

He promises to "compare the condition" of districts left to themselves with that of others in which religious or philanthropic enthusiasm is active. This will be an inquiry of the highest value. Mr. Booth fully appreciates the immense variety of the evils to be encountered, and I could wish that he gave not so much tacit encouragement to the idea that there can be "a plan" for doing away with them. And I trust that before throwing in his lot with Poor-Law Reform he will devote ample attention and analysis to poor-law administration and to medical charities. Side-lights on unreasoning philanthropy are already to be found. I quote one passage (p. 300) partly to illustrate the enjoyable quietness of the author's style.

"Nor is the struggle of different sects over these poor souls conducive to anything but evil. Those who are hunted up in their homes on a Sunday morning by the emissaries of five or six religious bodies are not likely to be spiritually impressed by any. Religious services cannot be expected to do much good to those who attend them only to qualify for charitable assistance, or even—though this is less objectionable—if their simple motive is to enjoy the meal of tea and buns which often follows. The competition of organized societies is further aggravated in evil effect by the efforts of many West End philanthropists, who choose St. Giles' as a field of independent charitable work."

Mr. Booth, then, has as yet no "moral" in the sense of a formulated plan. Perhaps, as he pursues his invaluable inquiries, he may lean more and more to the view that no one plan is needed so much as a gradual drawing together of the multiform agencies now at work, with a reasonable division of labor between them, so that nothing may be wasted, nothing done as on mere impulse, that the source of demoralization may be dried up, and the power of organization evoked in those classes whose life is now disorganized. However this may be, I will venture, at my own risk, to suggest a moral of a more general and theoretical kind. It is, that, from a work like this we learn the real meaning of that phrase which we are almost tired of hearing, "the social organism."

Why, as we study a really careful and persevering inquiry by skilled workers, are our common opinions constantly being upset and turned into their opposites by our finding that to go straight at an element A of the social whole, and do for it that which on a *prima facie* view it urgently needs, almost invariably produces the opposite result to that which we desire, even for A, not to speak of B, C, and D? The reason is simple. Common opinion accepts things in isolation; but social elements are much less isolated than anything else except the elements of thought, and that is what we mean when we speak of them as parts in an organism. The mere carefulness and extent of this inquiry must show us, if we have eyes to see, how hard it is to master the intricate and delicate relations of causality which make up the life of our neighbors. These considerations are not negative nor deterrent from action. They demand that we should treat our poorer neighbors as we treat ourselves, our friends and family; that we should consider what they are, how they live, what they expect of us, and how these expectations affect their action; that we should be humble, and keep open minds for every hint of the consequences of what we do, and that, so far as possible, we should avoid meddling with social matters on which we have not the time or the inclination to inform ourselves fully.

What a lesson in the study of the social organism is the short and modest conclusion written by the conductor of this immense investigation, and chiefly pointing forward to the need of further research!

BERNARD BOSANQUET.

NEIGHBORHOOD GUILDS AN INSTRUMENT OF SOCIAL REFORM. By Stanton Coit, Ph.D., Lecturer of the South Place Ethical Society, London. Swan, Sonnenschein & Co., London. Pp. 150.

Those of us who are doubtful with regard to the efficacy of General Booth's social scheme, are naturally eager to discover some other and more practical method of dealing with those terrible problems of modern life which are now engaging a large share of the attention of every thoughtful man. It would be a very high praise to any social reformer to say that he has succeeded in bringing forward a scheme which will accomplish all the objects that General Booth has at heart, and which will be free from all the drawbacks that are incident to his own proposal. I will not be so rash as to say that Dr. Coit has succeeded in doing this, but I will venture to say that this little book of his seems to me to indicate very clearly the direction in which such a scheme is to be sought. In writing it, Dr. Coit has evidently had General Booth's scheme constantly in view, and has also had constantly in view the criticisms that have been passed on that scheme, especially the very weighty criticisms by Mr. Loch and Mr. Bosanquet. To give an account of its contents would be superfluous. It is very easily accessible, and every one who is interested in social questions will, no doubt, procure a copy. It will be sufficient, therefore, to indicate the general character of the book. Dr. Coit intends to suggest by the term "Neighborhood Guild" that, "irrespective of religious belief or non-belief, all the people, men, women, and children, in any one street, or any small number of streets, in every working-class district in London, shall be organized into a set of clubs, which are by themselves, or in alliance with those of other neighborhoods, to carry out, or induce others to carry out, all the reforms—domestic, industrial, educational, provident, or recreative—which the social ideal demands." This may seem somewhat general and vague, but any one who will read through Dr. Coit's very clear and interesting exposition will soon find that the idea which he has in his mind is a quite definite and practical one. Perhaps the best way of indicating shortly its nature will be to note its relations to several other schemes which it naturally suggests,—viz., the Mediæval Guilds, Fourier's *phalanstères*, Toynbee Hall, the Charity Organization Society, and General Booth's Social Scheme.

It reminds us of the Mediæval Guilds, as being a fraternity banded together for social advancement; but it differs from them by its comprehensiveness, and by the immeasurably greater width of its aims. It would comprehend men of all trades, of all creeds, of all political parties, of all ages and sexes, as if in a single family group; and would seek to assist these not merely in their economic development, but also in their moral and intellectual culture. By its comprehensiveness it reminds us more of Fourier's *phalanstères* than of a mediæval guild; but from the former also it is differentiated by the fact that its organization does not require any social revolution. It does not aim at an artificial comprehen-